

**TESTIMONY OF THE  
DEPARTMENT OF INLAND FISHERIES AND WILDLIFE  
  
BEFORE THE JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON INLAND  
FISHERIES AND WILDLIFE**

**IN OPPOSITION TO  
L.D. 1226**

**An Act To Establish a Comprehensive Hunting License**

**SPONSORED BY:** by Representative SHAW of Standish.

**COSPONSORED BY:** Representatives: CRAFTS of Lisbon, REED of Carmel, TIMBERLAKE of Turner.

**DATE OF HEARING: April 28, 2015**

Good afternoon Senator Davis, Representative Shaw and members of the Inland Fisheries and Wildlife Committee. I am Bill Swan, Director of Licensing and Registration at the Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife, speaking on behalf of the Department, in opposition to **L.D. 1226**.

This bill expands the current resident hunting license and nonresident hunting license to encompass and replace all other hunting licenses and hunting permits except the:

1. Junior hunting license;
2. Resident and nonresident apprentice hunting licenses;
3. Antlerless deer and special deer season permits;
4. Moose permit;
5. Pheasant permit;
6. Migratory Waterfowl permit;

It increases the fee for a resident and a nonresident hunting license from \$25 to \$38 and from \$114 to \$143, respectively. This bill also increases the fee on resident and nonresident hunting and fishing combination licenses from \$42 to \$55 and from \$149 to \$178, respectively, to reflect the increase in the hunting license fee.

This bill also provides that infant, junior and senior resident archery lifetime hunting licenses purchased prior to January 1, 2016 remain valid and provide the same hunting opportunities as the expanded infant, junior and senior resident lifetime hunting licenses. It maintains the current firearm, bow and arrow and crossbow hunter education requirements.

While the Department acknowledges that the concept of simplifying hunting licenses and permits is a good idea, we have several concerns with this proposed legislation that we would like to share with the committee. Our first and foremost concern is that this proposal would increase the amount that the average hunter would spend each year to hunt. The majority of our hunters only purchase a hunt or a fish/hunt combo license each year. They do not purchase any of the

additional licenses or permits proposed to be eliminated. In effect, the majority of our hunters would pay more and would be subsidizing those hunters who typically do purchase the additional hunting permits each year.

Another concern that the Department has with the elimination of the bear, turkey, muzzleloading, or night coyote permits is that the ability of the Department to know how many people are participating in these activities would be diminished. We could certainly ask people questions about their activities during the license purchase process but experience has shown that this data will not be nearly as accurate as the data generated from the purchase of a permit for that activity.

This proposal appears to eliminate all alien licenses and permits and proposes to have aliens purchase non-resident licenses and permits. The Department has no problem with this concept but a careful analysis of the wording of all laws will need to be done to make sure that no conflicts in the law remain if this proposed legislation is enacted.

Currently, the revenue from some of the different hunting permits proposed to be eliminated is placed into dedicated accounts that are only used for special purposes. Under this proposal, these dedicated accounts would no longer be funded unless other provisions are made.

A possible oversight that the Department noticed in its review of this proposed legislation is that the Resident Apprentice Hunting license fee was not proposed to be increased while all other hunting license fees were. Having the fee for an apprentice hunting license different than the fee for a regular hunting license could be problematic.

Lastly, if the Committee decides to move forward with this legislation, the Department would recommend that the effective date be January 1, 2016. All licenses and documentation for 2015 has already been distributed to our agents and making this change in the middle of a license year would be extremely confusing and chaotic.

Thank you for your time and I would be glad to answer any questions you may have now or during the work session.